

VZCZCXYZ0015
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHEG #0121/01 0241503
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 241503Z JAN 08
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7965
INFO RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC

UNCLAS CAIRO 000121

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ELA AND EB/CIP/BA
COMMERCE FOR OBERG
USTR FOR HINCKLEY

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ECPS](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [USTR](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: EGYPT: POST SUBMISSION FOR SECTION 1377 TELECOM
TRADE AGREEMENTS 2008 REVIEW

REF SECSTATE 3689

¶1. We provide the below responses from the Government of Egypt to reftel concerns for the Section 1377 Telecom Trade Agreements 2008 Review.

Satellite Services

¶2. For all questions on licenses for satellite services, National Telecommunications and Regulatory Authority (NTRA) Executive President Dr. Amr Badawi referred us to information on the NTRA web site. The regulations for Inmarsat licenses are at http://www.tra.gov.eg/english/DPages_DPagesDetails.asp?ID=257&Menu=1 and for VSAT licenses are at http://www.tra.gov.eg/english/DPages_DPagesDetails.asp?ID=258&Menu=1. The procedures, conditions, and rules for general telecommunications services licensing are at http://www.tra.gov.eg/english/DPages_DPagesDetails.asp?ID=241&Menu=1.

¶3. NTRA Economic and Regulatory Affairs Sector Head Mahmoud El Gowini provided the following answers to reftel specific questions on satellite licensing:

Q: What are the rules under which an Egyptian telecom licensee can have access to and/or contract directly with a foreign satellite operator? If these are public, could you provide a copy to us or provide us with a web-site link? Must other users (e.g. banks, broadcasters) have a telecom license to operate a satellite dish?

A: Egyptian Telecom Licensees can have access to and/or contract directly with foreign satellite operators. Since they are already licensed they need not come back to the NTRA. Broadcasting according to the current rules is the prerogative of the Radio and Television Union. Satellite News Gathering (SNG) services are given timely permits to operate and those permits are renewable upon request.

Q: What is the process for a foreign satellite operator to petition to have its satellite capacity "approved" by the National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority (NTRA)? If this process is embodied in a regulation or rule, can you provide us with a copy?

A: Satellite operators submit a request to the NTRA to receive a license. The request must show all technical specs, coverage, bandwidth and applications. The NTRA will study the request, obtain clearance on the operator, confirm availability of required frequencies, a license is then granted. In the very near future the process will be shown with elaboration on our web site.

Time For License Application Processing

14. Regarding the question on the normal time required to process an application, the NTRA did not have a substantive response.

Voice over Internet Protocol

15. NTRA Vice President for Policies and International Cooperation Olfat Abd El Monsef provided the following answers to reftel specific questions on Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) licensing:

Q: What rules, if any, govern the provision of VoIP services in Egypt? Are these publicly available and may we have a copy or can you give us the link to a web-site where they are available?

A: Licenses and regulations in Egypt are based on technology-neutral principles. VoIP is considered as a technology and therefore any licensed operator in Egypt is allowed to use VoIP to provide the licensed services. As for the general rules governing VoIP services provision, VoIP usage for private use (PC to PC) is allowed without any license or registration. Licensed Class A and Class B data service providers are licensed to provide domestic VPN services to their customers using VoIP.

Q: Does the incumbent operator offer VOIP? Do any other companies, including foreign companies?

A: Currently the incumbent operator is offering voice services using VoIP technology - along with other technologies ? to provide international voice services as it is licensed to provide these services. Mobile operators are allowed to use VoIP technology as well for the provision of international voice services if they acquire the required international gateway license (one of the mobile operators has already been granted this license).

Q: If publicly available, please provide us with copies of any authorizations or licenses which have been granted for VoIP services.

A: NTRA is opening the competition in fixed networks; this license will include international voice services (international gateway) where VoIP is allowed. An RFP for the fixed voice services will be announced within the first quarter of 2008. National and foreign companies and consortiums are welcome to apply.

Ricciardone